

Lewis


AN IMPERIAL GATEWAY



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AN IMPERIAL GATEWAY

BY
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NEW YORK
FOREIGN DEPARTMENT
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS





Shanghai Harbor

AN IMPERIAL GATEWAY

THE NEW YORK OF CHINA

There is one great door by which the world's commerce and the world's people enter the Chinese Empire. Shanghai commands the trade of all but the three southern and the three most northern provinces. This modern city in China contains more "foreigners" than all of Japan. Sixty years have witnessed its growth from the nature state of a mud flat, lying alongside an old and sleepy walled city, which is still old and unaroused, to a municipality with vested interests in land and houses of \$156,000,000.* The turn-over in annual trade is one-fourth larger than Calcutta's—in fact, three times the value of its vested property. The growth in numbers, wealth, and might of this city is without parallel in the Far East. It is twice as large as its rivals, Yokohama or Hongkong, which, like Shanghai, are cities created within this commercial cycle.

A LOOK AT THE MAP

Shanghai is at the center, the converging point, of the coast of China, and near the mouth of the Yangtze, which, in the opinion of Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, is second only to the Amazon among rivers as a commercial asset. At Shanghai 650,000 people live in what are now quaintly called, as they were in the '40's, the "Settlements," and which are

*These and all subsequent money figures used denote gold unless otherwise specified.

under foreign or non-Chinese rule. This is provided for by the treaties wherein China has granted extra-territorial rights to foreign countries to build up and govern settlements at forty or more of her ports. The Shanghai walled city, half surrounded by the Settlement, contains another 100,000 inhabitants. Thus there are about three-fourths of a million people, all but 14,000 of whom are Chinese, living in Shanghai.

SILK CLAD HEATHENISM

The trade capital of China is a theatre of men. They outnumber the women almost two to one. They are the keenest business race in Asia. Here heathenism is glossed with silk, sanitated by European skill, caparisoned with autocars, and insured against the rapacity of the mandarins.

SLUGGISH VIRTUE

Here sluggish virtue sleeps. One woman in nine in the central or downtown district is a prostitute. Through this district all business men drive to their offices and the godly thread their way to church and schoolboys pass to and from the schools.

There are 1900 houses for the sale and smoking of opium in the Settlement, or one to about 330 of the people. In one of these over two thousand men and about five hundred women were found on an evening in May. Public women were allowed, contrary to municipal regulation, to traffic in over five hundred of these opium houses. In the downtown district is the famous Christian Mc-Tyiere school, upon which bawdy houses have encroached until the principal wrote me, "We are surrounded on all sides by conditions that are scarcely less evil and awful than hell itself. * * * Our nights are made hideous often till two or three o'clock in the morning with the most demoniacal screams that one can imagine. * * * At the rear of the school building we have had to nail up all blinds and erect a bamboo fence thirty feet high above our eight-foot wall to save our pupils from what they had to see any time, day or night, when they might chance to be at a window." The London Mission, the oldest mission in Shanghai, is completely surrounded by vice, and the market value of its property, when

sold for decent purposes, has decreased forty per cent because of these encroachments. This is a mathematical fact; and the head of the mission adds: "Open solicitation is only too common. I have often seen young men caught by the gown and drawn into the alleyways abutting on Shantung road. * * * We find it difficult to get respectable Chinese women to attend our church services." And after painful experience of the boys in the mission school, "being contaminated by the vicious surroundings," the mission was obliged to build new buildings and move the entire school and teaching staff into the suburbs, as land could not be bought nearer.

THE WHITE PERIL

These were not conditions of life in the walled city, but in the Settlement, where only white men vote and hold office. Nor is the story all told. The "American Girl Colony," or red light district for Europeans, was made notorious by the gayest women from San Francisco and houses from which American girls were engaged for houseboat trips, for ocean voyages, and for apartment life.

But let us pass on out of the central district, center of the great business "hongs," and resort, likewise, of the voluptuary. In the northern district the Chinese courtesans in fifty houses are given weekly health inspection certificates.

Hard by are the licensed liquor sellers. Procurers, Chinese and foreign, who buy or kidnap girls in the interior and in other lands, and who live off their earnings, thrive here. Ten years ago not a single Christian public building was open at night to the 300,000 Chinese men of Shanghai. Is it strange that they went wrong?



The Initial Association Plant



The Second Temporary Quarters

THE MIGHT OF LEAVEN

In 1897 eleven foreign educated Chinese met in my study, faced this need, decided to organize a Young Men's Christian Association, and then invited Mr. S. K. Tsao to be their secretary. He resigned his professorship in the Anglo-Chinese College and began work immediately. A tiny house of four rooms was engaged. Since then the Association has moved three times, crowded out of each house by men. The Chinese Association now occupies and owns a modern building, while there is a reorganized European branch, a Japanese branch and six student branches in as many Christian and government colleges. Mr. P. Y. Kong, for many years in the China Inland Mission's great business office, later joined the staff as financial secretary. In 1903 two associate foreign secretaries were provided from North America in the persons of W. W. Lockwood and Arthur Rugh. The Chinese employed force has been re-enforced from time to time, bringing the staff to the present maximum of nine.

SELF SUPPORT

The Association in Shanghai is not supported by American money. Foreign secretaries have been maintained here as they

have been in various parts of the world, but the Shanghai Chinese Association has from the first derived every dollar of its budget from local sources. Last year this amounted to \$16,210 silver, of which \$12,022 was provided by the ordinary sources of income. Of the \$4,188, silver, received in subscriptions, the members provided \$2,130, in addition to \$8,560 paid in dues and fees. Reduced to the silver basis, the average amount paid per member in Buffalo is \$15.82, in fifteen of the New York City branches, \$22.18, and in Shanghai, \$27.04. The visits paid to the building daily are 66 per cent of the membership. The society is not a mission, either to the poor or the rich, nor is it a foreign mission of Americans, but it is a Chinese institution.

SELF GOVERNMENT

Money speaks not in platitudes, and it has been noted how the members pay. But even more, they direct, they control. This was the first Association in China to have an entirely Chinese committee of management, and that worked so well for eight years that now the directorate of the Association is entirely in the hands of Chinese. Mr. Tsao, in the course of his speech at an Astor House banquet to American and European laymen, April, 1907, said: "The most gratifying thing to us Chinese is that you thoroughly trust us with the management of the Association."

TRUE TO TYPE

Taotai Wong Koh-shan, at the laying of the corner stone, speaking as president of the Association, said: "The motto of our building—'Not to be ministered unto, but to minister' — words spoken by our great Master, is



The Last Rented Building

expressive of our underlying object. This is the motto which we must all strive to live up to. We are not merely an athletic and social club, nor merely an educational institution, but an organization, the purpose of which is to band together Christian young men, stimulate their spiritual natures, strengthen them to meet the temptations of city life, such as those in Shanghai, and set them to doing Christian work for their comrades who are not Christians. We dedicate ourselves as well as this building to the accomplishment of this high and noble purpose."

The Association is not only managed by Chinese, but it is mutualized, rather than secretarialized. Mutual even in the raising of money: each member of the board of directors takes the responsibility of raising his proportion of the current budget, and many members offer their services. Together they assume a larger proportion of the budget than is usual in the North American Associations.

PROMOTING EDUCATION, MORALS AND RELIGION

In China an older brother may be held partly responsible for the conduct, or even the debts of his younger brothers. Our members who are from the well-to-do classes asked us to provide for their younger brothers. That was the beginning of the college preparatory course, which enrolls 183 boys paying thirty dollars each per year in tuition. These boys are sent by their parents past Government schools with cheaper tuition for the sake of the superior moral safeguards thrown around them by the Association. Thorough Bible instruction is compulsory and welcome. The juniors are out of the building by the time the men begin to come in from their offices. The business college for men follows in the evening. Ten classes with 144 men were enrolled in the old premises. The educational department for three years has been administered with a safe margin of profit, while \$1,000 silver has been declined as fees in a single month because the crowding of classes in the limited space had reached its limit.

Some may be surprised to know that the Chinese are men of books and those who grant this point do not always know that they are also interested in Christianity. During the canvass for money for the new building,



Wong Koh-shan, President



Tong Kai-son, Treasurer



Mr. Ting, a silk expert, a new convert, who was leader of one of the "tens," walked up to the counter arm-in-arm with a Chinese doctor and said, "The Lord has answered my prayer. My team is a weak one and they are not getting money fast enough, so I prayed to-night. You know before I couldn't pray; and I came and stood at the stairs, waiting for the Lord to send me a good helper, and Dr. Chang has walked right in and wants to help. Put him on my team."

OVER ONE HUNDRED CONVERSIONS

This year there have been 122 men converted, like Mr. Ting. A meeting conducted by Mr. Mott, and another by Mantle, the English evangelist, brought out many inquirers. After they had been sifted they were introduced to the Chinese pastors of all denominations, who were there for that purpose. These pastors formed them into Bible classes, some of which met at the Association, others in the churches. Each pastor had the addresses and called upon his men. A Chinese secretary gave part of his time daily to calling upon the inquirers, bringing them to the Association or to the churches. This was a special effort, but last year in ordinary times there were 205 men in the Association Bible classes. The average weekly attendance in gospel meetings for the year was 263.



Staff of Secretaries, 1907

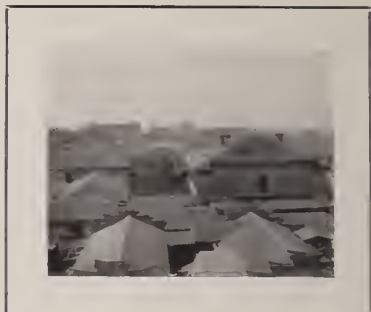
SPRINGING THE MAN TRAPS

If our religion means what Jesus intended, it must transform not only the heart of man, but man's relations with man—society. The Association has faced the unutterable conditions of evil in Shanghai. Europeans said, "Nothing can be done." So the general secretary of the Association turned complainant and appeared in the Austrian, Russian, French, and Spanish consular courts and succeeded in closing up thirty immoral houses. Then the public conscience awoke and men of all churches co-operated. The police were ordered to drive solicitation from the streets. A municipal grant-in-aid was made to the Chinese rescue mission. As a result of negotiations, the new Imperial criminal code has placed heavy penalties upon buying and selling Chinese girls to the passions of men; a door of escape was opened to American girls, and a permanent committee formed to help them.

THE GAMBLING CONTAGION

The third master passion among Chinese is not for liquor, but for gambling. The law in Shanghai against public gambling was relaxed by the municipal authorities twice each year during the white man race weeks. Then the saturnalia broke out, in tea houses, clubs and gardens. On one vacant piece of land in the heart of the town ninety-two gambling

The View
West
from the
Roof
of the
Associa-
tion
Building



tables and roulette were counted. A Jew lost \$700 while two Association men were observing. This was only one instance. The people caught the contagion. It was debauching the young men; professional crooks raided the town. We could not stand by and watch such havoc year after year, nor was it enough to pray about it. Prayer led to action. The Chinese Association formally requested the city government to enforce the laws, as they were legally and morally bound to do. We were supported by influential Chinese officials and merchants, but the authorities naively replied, "It is old custom to gamble." The correspondence was then published in the press, and so persistent and influential was the support given that the Government reversed its action, and now absolutely prohibits public gambling.

AMERICA'S SHAME REMOVED

One of the reasons why the "American Colony" has flourished was the lax administration of the American consuls, who "registered" women of ill repute. Americans in China thereupon worked for the removal of disgraceful consuls and the creation of a demand which has finally taken the form of a law of Congress, creating a Federal court for American interests in China, having its headquarters in Shanghai. Within a few weeks of the opening of the court, District Attorney Bassett robbed the "American Colony" of its nom de guerre and nationality and Judge Wilfley imposed fines of \$1,000 with deportation, or imprisonment upon the American keepers of such houses. It was officially reported that the officers of



The View
North
from the
Roof
of the
Associa-
tion
Building

the Association had given the court important practical support. Thus, for both the Chinese and the American, has the road to decency in Shanghai been cleared of some of its man-traps.

EXPERT APPROVAL

The approval of your business by experts, who have been longer in that business than you, strengthens the faith of the stockholders in the management. After examining the Association in Shanghai, the great Japanese missionary, Dr. J. H. De Forrest, who had faced similar problems there, wrote, "I was profoundly impressed with the scientific manner in which you carry on your work in Shanghai—perhaps business methods would express it better, coupled with deep religious insight." Dr. Arthur H. Smith, the most famous American author of books on China, after very close contact with the Shanghai work, said, "It is very clear to me that your society is doing a work in China second in importance to no other." Taotai Ku Hung-ming, for many years secretary to the Viceroyalty of Hunan and Hupeh, a Confucian official who writes English with elegance and who is at home in German philosophy, closed an address at our annual banquet with the words, "I have come here to-night to endorse this Association because you are a continual protest against the attempt to ignore the fundamentals. The most important thing in Western civilization is the Christian religion, and amongst all the societies of this place yours is the most important in helping our Chinese to never forget this fact." Prominent among

the contributors is the venerable finance minister of China, Sir Robert Hart, who sent for the building \$750 and wrote: "I am in entire sympathy with the work and object of this Association, and I am sure its future history will record much good effected by it for China and the Chinese, and, indeed, also for the world at large, seeing that whatever benefits so grand a section of the human race must carry with it blessings for the whole family of men." The Centenary Missionary Conference assembled in the unfinished building in May, 1907. During their eleven days of deliberation they put their approval upon the city and college associations, and then committed to the associations by special resolution on behalf of united Christianity, the work in the Government colleges of China, the preparation of all undenominational Bible study literature for the churches, and effort among the immense aggregation of Chinese students in Japan.

OTHER FORCES

It must not be supposed that the Association alone stands for higher ideals and warfare against sin in Shanghai. There are two Methodist, three Presbyterian, two Episcopal, one Anglican, two Baptist, two Catholic, as well as other churches of Chinese; five churches of Europeans, two sailors' missions; two rescue committees with seven workers; great societies for the creation and distribution of literature; the chief headquarters for missionary administration in China; and an increasingly strong Christian public sentiment, which is unhesitatingly backed up by such newspapers as the North China Herald. The Association during these brief years has won its way into prominence and usefulness, and is utilized as a common meeting ground for united Christianity.

ASIA'S MODEL BUILDING

Shanghai has just occupied its own permanent building, which the International Committee refers to as the "model building in Asia." The story of that building is an adventure with God, wherein brick, mortar, steel, and teak were marshalled by an unseen power, while the men in the street remarked, "Behold, that dreamer cometh." To realize the dream, a godly woman in Ohio first gave

\$5,000, and then added \$5,000; a college friend and his mother offered \$11,000; a manufacturer added \$5,000; and an unknown giver provided one-third of the total sum—\$50,000. All these pledges were made upon condition that China should provide the site.

LOT SEVENTY-FOUR

Land in Shanghai has a high appreciation of itself. In some sections it had increased three hundred per cent since the Association started, and it was a full year before a practical step could be taken. One day an officer of the Association was bowed in prayer over a map of the central district and there came to him the decision, as if it were let down from above, to purchase Cadastral lot number 74, which, located on the great street known as Szechuen Road, was the exact size desired for the building, 112 feet by 120 feet. The lot was owned by Sir Thomas Hanbury, in London, and it was urged that he would not sell, but six months of negotiations resulted in the purchase of lot seventy-four at taels 45,000, which was two-thirds of its value, or about \$30,000, at the prevailing rates of exchange. No such amount had been previously subscribed in an Oriental city for a young men's temple. The wise ones wagged their heads and said, "Where can it be gotten?" The long story of two years' work may be summarized by saying that non-Christian Chinese paid in cash during the construction period \$16,000; that Christians gave \$8,000 as a memorial to their Chinese and foreign martyrs;



The New Building



Merchants' Sons in the Association Day School

that a few thousands accrued from the sale of land to the city government for road widening; and that the balance was pledged before the day of dedication. The total cost of the plant and equipment exceeds \$100,000 gold.

NOTABLE SUBSCRIPTION LIST

An analysis of this enterprise brings out into bold relief the fact that the great non-Christian satraps and mandarins, merchants and presidents of guilds, and officers of the Confucian order have put money into this Christian undertaking. Notable among these are Viceroy Tuan Fang, the Honorable Yen Fuh, philosopher and chief advisor to the Department of Education, Imperial Railway Commissioner Sze, Admiral Sah, Governor Chen, who rules more people than the Governors General of Canada and Australia combined, and three Haikwan Taotais or Mayors.

The gracious act of Secretary Taft in proceeding directly from the Minnesota on his recent tour, to participate prominently in the dedicatory exercises, at the time when all official China was intent upon his landing, exalted the Young Men's Christian Association throughout the Empire.

WHERE THE RACE OF MEN GO BY

The building is located on Szechuen Road, the first thoroughfare west of the Bund, or water front boulevard, and runs from the moat



Lobby—Looking into the Reading Room

of the walled city at the south, across the French, Central and Hongkew districts and terminates in a new country park to the north. A record of the traffic was kept on an average clear day in September from six A. M. to six P. M., with the result that 721 carriages, 380 bicycles, 368 truck carts, thirty-four motor cars, 5,140 jinrickshaws, 2,045 wheel-barrows, and 9,434 pedestrians were counted passing in front of the building. A complete record was not kept of the persons other than pedestrians, but a careful estimate of the number puts it at over 26,600 for the day.

THE BUILDING IN DETAIL

Most of the building is of four stories, but a portion has five. The gymnasium, sixty-two feet by forty-two feet, is the first complete thing of its kind in China, and considering the extraordinary popularity of our outdoor Chinese athletics, it is anticipated that gymnasium activities will flourish. In the first story are the twenty-five horse-power engine and dynamo, the hot water boiler which heats the building, the baths, locker room, and three stores for rent.

The main feature of the second story is the great suite of rooms opening out of the lobby, above which is the rotunda supported by massive Japanese columns. To the south is the reception room, soda fountain and three offices for the Chinese and foreign secretaries. To the north is the reading room and beyond it the library. To the west is the beauti-

fully carved main entrance to Martyrs' Memorial Hall. Near the counter is the stairway leading to the gymnasium and the physical director's office, and at the north end of the corridor is the main flight of stairs to the gallery of Memorial Hall and to the floors above. On arrival in the third story, the dining room, where both Chinese and European food is served, is on the left, as well as the private dining room and European kitchen. In the rotunda is a balcony where an orchestra plays during festal occasions. On this floor also is a suite of six offices for the General Committee of the Associations for China, Korea and Hongkong. In the story over the Memorial Hall are five class rooms furnished from Grand Rapids, a boys' reading room, the educational secretary's office, and an apartment of three living rooms for one of the secretarial staff. Over all is a half-story containing a large class room, and two dormitories for the use of Chinese secretaries who may be sent to Shanghai from other cities for practical training. A small building at the rear of the large one, contains a "godown," or store rooms, coal room, room for servants, native kitchen, and the power house.

"OURS"

A young men's temple in the heart of heathenism. Such fruits as these are not of recent planting. Medhurst, Boone, Allen, Moule, Yen and Yates planted, we are gathering the increase. These are a type of Chinese such as few of you in America have seen, unless you have happened on them in a Yale, or an Oberlin, or at the Legation. The Association's founders believed in them, trusted them, gave them large works to do, loved them through their mistakes, and they have made the institution theirs. The great Verbeck master of Japanese conditions took as the key to his relationships to men, "Remain in shadow in order to increase light." The foreign missionary must not be an over-lord. He must be content to appear in the background and press others into the light. If everything centers in him, if his word is law, if his wishes are commands, then the work is an exotic, a mission, an imported institution. Said a Chinese, "This Association is ours; if it needs help we must give what it needs; if it wants money we must get the money; if it has trouble we will have trouble, too; we are the Association."

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